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Amendments to the Specification:

Please substitute the following paragraph for the paragraph beginning on page 1, lines 2-5 of the specification:

The present application claims priority from U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/226,627 60/227,627 entitled "Apparatus and Method for Manufacturing Panels from Wood Pieces" and filed on August 24, 2000, the contents of which are incorporated herein by reference.